



## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **May 18, 2012**

A regular *public meeting* of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council was held on Friday, May 18, 2012, at Sunny Days EIP in Manalapan, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Warren Moore, Acting Chair, who presided.

#### **ATTENDANCE** – *Attached*

#### **WELCOME/PRESIDER REPORT** – Warren Moore, Acting Chair

1. Mr. Moore *welcomed all attendees* and thanked Joyce Salzberg for hosting today's meeting. At his request, SICC members and 17 public members introduced themselves and identified their connection with early intervention.
2. Mr. Moore introduced *Manuel Jimenez, M.D.*, Robert Wood Foundation Clinical Scholar, University of Pennsylvania Fellow, Developmental Behavior Pediatrics, CHOP. Dr. Jimenez made a 30-minute power point presentation of research he has done in Pennsylvania on the early intervention referral process. The focus was on why families don't follow through on initial referral and why some families are missed in the first place. Members participated in a follow-up question/answer session.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the *March 30, 2012* meeting were approved as distributed – upon motion by Joseph Holahan, seconded by Michele Christopoulos and unanimously carried.

#### **SICC COMMITTEES**

Following are reports of SICC committees, which met this morning in Early Bird Session.

1. **Administrative** – Chanell McDevitt for Celine Fortin, Chair

A. The *SICC Proposed Budget FY 2013* in the amount of \$36,000 (the same as the past four years) was distributed/discussed/adopted (attached to file copy) – upon motion by Ms. Salzberg, seconded by Ms. McDevitt and carried. Up to the present, Children's Specialized

Hospital has absorbed the costs of room, food and parking fees for SICC members when meeting there. In the future, parking fees may be allocated to the SICC budget. Any unused portion of the budget is returned to the State's early intervention program.

B. Mr. Moore has asked the committee to review the *policies on committees* – especially as they relate to the appointment of non-SICC members – for report at the July retreat.

2. **Family Support** – Tia Dix, Co-Chair

The committee – most of whom are new to the Council -- conducted an overview of issues addressed in prior years. In moving ahead, the committee will focus on the *transition process*. Prior to the July retreat, the committee will meet via telephone conference or email exchange.

3. **Early Learning Challenge** – Barbara Tkach, Chair

The committee focused on the *Birth to Three Standards* – a copy of which was passed around for Council members' quick perusal. **Council agreed** -- upon motion by Beverley Peto, seconded by Annette Ristoro and carried – **to review the draft, send comments to Ms. Tkach and, when a final version is available, take a position on the document.**

- Ms. Tkach will see that members get the document for dissemination, with a time-line for feedback.
- If the final version presents a conflict to state employee SICC members, they may abstain from voting on a consensus document.

4. **Service Delivery** – Warren Moore, Chair

The committee had referrals from the 3/30/12 SICC meeting:

- (a) Follow trends of the *New Jersey Autism Study (NJAS)*
- (b) Policy and procedure for *EIP agency designation; EIP letter of agreement*
- (c) Policy and procedure for *EIP early intervention provider assignment; provider agencies/practitioners.*

The committee focused on (b) and (c) – to understand the process and the issues it presented. It was agreed that, to move forward, Lead Agency input was required. With this in mind, the committee will have two meetings prior to the July retreat.

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES**

Gloria Rodriguez, Assistant Commissioner; Karen Melzer, CSPD Coordinator

1. On April 30, the Federal office provided a final allocation table for FFY 2012 Part C of IDEA for the application submitted in April 2012. The allocation increased \$95,205 from \$10,720,012 to \$10,815,217. An amended application has been submitted to account for the additional funds, which were applied to service coordination grants and Audit.

2. Distributed/discussed was a letter from the Director of the Office of Special Education Programs, providing information regarding OSEP's *Results-Driven Accountability in Special Education (RDA) initiative* (attached to file copy). Also supplied were two documents: (a) a brief summary of OSEP's vision for reforming the accountability system; and (b) a document responding to questions regarding the initiative. NECTAC forwarded this information to ensure that Part C Coordinators, ICC Chairs and Section 619 Coordinators would engage in reforming the accountability system in a manner that leads to improved educational outcomes for infants, children and youth with disabilities.

3. Distributed/discussed was a communication from Mary E. O'Dowd, M.P.H., Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, reflecting Governor Christie's overall emphasis on fiscal responsibility (attached to file copy). In moving toward greater fiscal responsibility and transparency in the grants-in-aid funded programs, DHSS adopted five *cost-controlling initiatives* that apply to grants held with DHSS. These initiatives are not retroactive and will become effective at the time of contract renewal, effective July 1, 2012.

4. NJEIS policies and procedures are being reviewed/updated based on the *new Part C regulations and revised NJEIS IDEA Part C*. Eligibility decisions for early intervention include, but are not limited to:

- Battelle Development Inventory-2 BDI-2 required
- Medical and other reports
- Information gathered from parent interview
- Additional criteria-referenced or standardized instruments

Changes:

1. Development Delay ... Age percentages have been removed, leaving standard deviation as the criteria for delayed development:
  - -1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two or more developmental areas, or
  - -2.0 standard deviations below the mean in one functional developmental area.
2. Corrected age for prematurity has been removed and is not supported using standard deviation.
3. Informed clinical opinion has been further clarified in regulation, including in no event "*may informed clinical opinion be used to negate the results of evaluation instruments used to establish eligibility...*"

5. Distributed/discussed were *Family Cost Participation Reports 5/1/12* (attached to file copy): (a) revenue by statement date, (b) suspensions by month delinquent letter generated, (c) by month child exited EI, (d) by month child exited EI with FPL. Records indicate that the system is stable; that there is no increase in families dropping out because of cost. The \$6 million revenue is on track with prior years.

6. Alvina Seto, *Procedural Safeguards* Coordinator, distributed/commented on several aspects of the activity report since the Council's last meeting (attached to file copy). In response to a request for comparative figures with prior years, Ms. Seto said a comparative report would be initiated in 2013 when the comprehensive collection and reporting process will have been in place for one year.

**UPDATE FROM REICS --** No report, since this is their grant writing period.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. At the preceding meeting, Council agreed to send *letters to the Governor and legislators* (3/30/12 minutes, page 2) which would be drafted by Ms. Fortin, Ms. Salzberg and Mr. Weiss; that the drafts be circulated for Council approval; that the letters be signed by Acting Chair Moore. The draft was circulated today (attached to file copy). Mr. Moore said he could not sign the proposed letter as SICC chair, but individual members as private citizens could send whatever they wished. Ms. Rodriguez stated that members employed by the State would not be able to sign such a letter. Ms. Rodriguez further stated that any concerns of the SICC should be directed to the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services; that it was inappropriate for the Council officially to send concerns directly to the Governor and/or legislators.

No motion was offered to proceed with this letter, so the issued was not pursued.

2. As a follow-up to suggestions for the *July 27<sup>th</sup> SICC retreat* made at the previous meeting, Council agreed to:

- Include the REIC Directors
- Hire a facilitator – upon motion by Mr. Moore, seconded by Ms. Salzberg, carried
- Hold the retreat at an acceptable location
- Have a session on “role/accountability of SICC with the Lead Agency”

**NEW BUSINESS** – There was none.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. *David Holmes, interim Executive Director of ABCD/Early Intervention Providers Association (EIPA)* ... ABCD supports budgetary efforts for early intervention, and will write individual letters to advocate for system issues that need to be changed ... Reiterated desirability of adding non-SICC members to the SICC Service Delivery Committee ... Was not aware of NJEIS 18; urged Dr. Rodriguez to give EIPA an opportunity to give input on cost containment issues while being determined; will reach out to her for clarification of the policy and how it affects providers who are on the front line ... Will look for Autism statute updates ... Reported on a *Help Me Grow* grant of \$20,000, awarded to DCF, with which Ms. Tkach is familiar and will keep SICC updated.

2. *Carola d’Emery of Sunny Days EIP*... Alleged that few knew about eligibility changes; stressed the importance of sharing new policies on directives in advance before changes took place, so the participants most directly affected would have time to understand them before sharing with others.

3. *Pamela Schachter, UMDNJ/EI Program Manager* ... Reiterated concern expressed by Ms. d'Emery ... Expressed frustration , as program manager, in attempting to understand the changes to “informed clinical opinion” and the difficulty of explaining them to Program Coordinators; requested guidance from DHSS ... Confirmed the challenge to the Department of (a) providing information to the participants prior to sending it out to the general public, and (b) striving for more effective communication with those affected by Department directives.

**ADJOURNMENT** – 1:00 p.m.

Upon motion by Ms. McDevitt, seconded by Ms. Colucci and carried.

***APPROVED***

***9.14.12***